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BOOK REVIEWS

METHODS AND PRINCIPLES

America's Greatest Problem: The Negro. By R. W. SHUFELDT, M.D.
Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Company, Publishers, 1915. 8°, XII,
377 pp. 52 illustrations, cloth.

If the deportation of the negroes could be effected, I, for one, would not care a straw, whether they liked it or not. I should be for sending them away all the same and for keeping them away afterward, just as the Federal Government keeps the Chinese away. I should be in favor of shipping every negro back to the region whence they came, whether it pleased them or not. I am so loyal to anything that will sustain the purity of the best white blood in the United States; drain it of superstition of all kinds; purge it of crime and immorality and preserve its integrity, that I would see every negro in America transported to the desert of the Soudan, rather than allow them, for any consideration whatever, to jeopardize by race intermixture the race and civilization it has taken us centuries to establish.

Leprosy is no worse a disease, than what the presence of the negro stands for in this country today, and especially in the South. The only trouble is: This Government is a bad physician in a case demanding—long demanding—prompt and very different treatment from that which it has heretofore received. We know that the parasite is gnawing at the patient's vitals, but our procrastination and moral cowardice prevent us from applying the proper treatment, that's all.

Men like Booker T. Washington and W. E. D. Du Bois are traitors to their race in this country, and are the worst enemies the negroes in the United States have today.

The concubinal white man is a lecherous being and the Negro concubine a human without the least trace of moral sense. Offsprings from such unions swarm the Southern States. What is to prevent this progeny from being worse than animal? Such creatures are more dangerous to society than wild beasts; for these last can easily be hunted and shot, while the former go on procreating their lecherous kind without hindrance.

The foregoing paragraphs are quoted literally. Their number could easily have been tripled and quadrupled, but they are quite sufficient to show the tendency of the book and the sentiments of the author. In fact the whole volume, however excellently letterpressed, abounds in similar sentimental phrases and boundless exaggerations. I looked in vain for one single new or interesting statement. The author's name on

the title page is followed by nineteen lines, recording his membership in scientific societies, but the few—very few—scientific pages of his book are singularly antiquated. About fifty years ago one used to call the hair of the Negro “woolly”; now anthropologists are well aware that it would be difficult to find a greater difference in hair than there is between the hard, thick, and spiralic hair of the real African and the soft, thin, and wavy wool of a sheep.

Really grotesque in this respect are figs. 7 and 8, which are intended to show the difference between the cranial sutures of “Caucasian” and Negro children about the time of puberty. Both skulls are equally metopic, but the sutures of the “Caucasian” are drawn wide apart as is the case with the skull of a newborn baby.

Equally characteristic of the author's entire lack of scientific training and discernment is fig. 12, giving two grotesque caricatures under the title “Comparison of the Physiognomy of a Congo Negro and Caesar.” Such drawings were permissible a hundred years ago; nowadays they are ridiculous.

A significant feature of the book is the great quantity of old newspaper clippings and private letters reproduced; perhaps one third of the volume being in this way printed in quotation marks. How lavish the author is in the use of quotations, could be illustrated by dozens of examples; but the absurdity of many of them is well characterized in the reproduction of a letter, written by a lady in Georgia, stating that

No white woman dares walk alone and unprotected on the country road or even in the Southern village, when the shadows fall. . . . Briefly, then, I am writing under the nervous tension of expecting to be strangled at any moment, as there is a negro man in the house with me and I am—alone.

Certainly the colored man is a serious problem for the United States, but sooner or later the problem will be solved, just as well, as sooner or later, modern society will be forced, in Europe no less than in America, to revise its old social ideas and its old criminal laws. Certainly there are criminals and persons with inferior morality and inferior intellect in every human group, white and colored; but we shall sooner or later learn to eliminate them. This *can* be done and *will* be done, but certainly not in the way Dr Shufeldt tries to suggest to us.

FELIX VON LUSCHAN